

Christian Reflector.

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Thirty-six, each enclosing

one cent, will receive

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Poetry.

For the Christian Reflector.

On the death of Rev. W. G. Crocker,

LATE MISSIONARY TO AFRICA.

Long-injured, bleeding Africa, whose shores
From year to year have echoed to the groans
Of many a bursting heart—whose every vale
And hill-top hath a tale of piteous woe—
Tell me, thou, who hast felt too heavily
Oppression's ponderous weight, grinding these down—
Tell me, what means this cry of martyred blood
Which from thy shores comes leaping o'er the wave?

Hast thou, to avenge thy wrongs, an altar reared
To thy paternal deities, on which

To immolate the man of God we mourn?

Or couldst thou thus hope to redeem thy sons
From slavery's power, and break the Christian's yoke?

No, it was not thy act, we charge it not!

To thee, oppressed one, this blow the blow.

The man who failed to avert it, suffered; not

As Hindoo who climbs the funeral pile,

To gain a spirit more skin to His;

With a spirit more skin to His;

Whose pius CROCKER gives life to thee!

These love, these love to Christ, ay, for thee,

To these, thou child of sorrows, yes, for thee,

These brought him to thy shores to die.

Ah! here are walls which, if they could, might speak

Of sighs and tears and groans too deep for words—

Might tell how he was stricken for a heart.

Wholly the Lord's—a heart deeply imbued

With Heaven's own Spirit, only that he might

Devote that heart to thee, O Africa!

Thy walls, the schools of the prophets, and thy groves,

Where once a Knowles has walked, where now rests,

Those witnessed to his agonizing prayers,

His voice sincere, which pledged his soul to God.

He loved to pour his plaint into the ear

Of His Who hears in secret, and to drink

Full draughts of life from fountains deep and pure—

Love such as Jesus felt, strong, deathless love—

Love that can never die.

To bear his cross and grieve his God.

O! if these walls had tongues to speak,

Tell us, tell us, Africa, of his love to thee—

Tell us how he wept over thy wrongs—

Has grieved that men, bearing the name of Christ,

Should hold thy sons in bondage, and hast prayed

That thy god, thy God, would break the oppressor's yoke.

Ner did his love find rest in sight alone.

It tore him from his home, and sent him forth

To bind thy wounds—to heal thy aching heart—

Tell us like a Saviour—tell of one

Who loved thee, Africa, one whose word

Has power to make e'en bondmen free indeed.

Love him to thy shores, supported him

While laboring 'neath thy sultry sun, buoyed up

His soul amid his arduous toils, and made

Thy good seem dear for life itself.

Wearied with care, he might have laid him down

And slept in death. But no, God sent him home

To touch a thousand chords of sympathy

In other hearts, and then return again,

To seal his love by dying on thy shores.

Yes, there he rests, the pious Crocker rests.

Yet from his ashes comes to us a voice

Louder than blood of Abel. 'T is a voice

That whispers peace to those, oppressed one, while

In terms the Christians can't mistake, it pleads

They need, and urge to bid thee live.

We hear the call. We echo back love's plea.

Our hearts respond, Live, Africa, O live!

God bless the little band now laboring there;

Bless her whom the departed bore from us;

Long may she live for Africa's sake, and long

May all God's faithful children there be spared;

And be the union joined there;

Till, from each vale and over-reaching hill,

When the shot heard at Gettysburg, till the Lord

Shall reign above o'er thee, and our own hand

Shall hallow God on all inscribe.

Newburyport, July 23, 1844.

R. B. M.

Tales and Sketches.

For the Christian Reflector.

COWEBOSCON,

OR THE FREEMAN ENSLAVED.

CHAPTER III.

Coweboscon's master—Hoc Niger—Mysterious affair

—Payment of an old score—Punishment—Revenge

—A dialogue.

Alas, poor hapless slaves are doomed to toll

With naked limbs, beneath the dismal rig

Of fierce burning suns, and chilling blists

The heat upon them with alternate strokes;

While long years of ferocious toil drag

Poor wretches, and the grinding wheels

Of time, that measures out the dreary years.

Of hard servile life, scarcely seem to move,

And the toil and weather-beaten flesh ;

Longs for the peaceful, lasting sleep of death,

And seeks a shelter in the silent grave,

From hunger, toil, and raging elements.'

The man who was called the master of Coweboscon, was rather verging towards the decline of life. He belonged to one of the wealthiest and most aristocratic families of old Virginia, and had emigrated to Alabama, when the State was new, in order to preserve the wealth and independence, which the impoverished soil that had inherited from his father would not enable him to do.

His early days he had spent principally in sport and dissipation. Like many whose life wealth renders independent of toil, he was captivated by useless and often harmful pleasures. Later in youth, he had traveled considerably, and he was now a man of really extensive observation and considerable intelligence. He was possessed of a lively, agreeable, and somewhat humorous disposition, which rendered him a very pleasant companion, and hence his society was generally sought. His house was usually filled with visitors, when he was at home, and being of a remarkably generous, hospitable spirit, he spared no pains to render those about him happy.

His winters were principally spent in New Orleans, or Mobile, whilst his summers he usually passed at home, where, with his guests, he enjoyed the cool, refreshing breeze of the Mexican Gulf, or in travelling at the North.

In his travels he had found the strange looking negro described in the last chapter. Partly for the sake of having a slave, so remarkably deformed as a curiosity, and partly because, as he was stout and healthy, he thought he would be a profitable servant, he purchased him and brought him home.

As he was somewhat curious in the matter of names, he gave him the cognomen of Niger, adding Hoc by way of convenience, as his more common appellation. Thus named, he placed him in the kitchen. Hoc Niger was as strangely constituted mentally as he was physically. Sometimes he exhibited a sagacity truly remarkable. One would think him uncommonly gifted. He frequently manifested a keenness of wit and satire severe in the extreme. Then again nothing could be seen in him but the

most utter stupidity,—a dullness of intellect almost idiotic. At such times, it was altogether impossible to make him comprehend the plainest and most simple statement. His utmost sagacity sometimes could not even get beyond a direct command when enforced by an appeal to the whip.

Added to this he had a disposition most extremely perverse. He could never be trusted by any one. Even his master had failed, by the most terrible punishments, to bring him to mount upon his horse, sent him to his master. At the same time he watched the individuals engaged in the outrage, and caused them to be secured, to await whatever punishment the proprietor might order to be inflicted. There were four negroes engaged in the affair, Stuke, the leader of whom, was a short, broad-shouldered, stout fellow, with a most insufferably sulky, obstinate, perverse disposition. He was fully Hoc's equal in personality of character, but greatly inferior in sagacity and cunning. He was the champion of the negroes at the plantation, and a general favorite with the white folks. At last, his master kept him as a sort of a fool, or jester, something after the manner of the old fidalgo lords. Hoc held this office at the time Coweboscon was taken into the service of his master. At dinner, as his master and the guests sat at their wine, the licensed wif of Hoc Niger never failed to produce a continued roar of laughter. The deeper they got in their wine, the sharper Hoc's wit always became. Among Hoc's various accomplishments, were those of singing and fiddling. He had really a fine voice, and to his songs there was no end. Nobody knew where he had learned his songs, or who had been his instructor. He never revealed anything of his former history. Whenever any one questioned him upon this point, his obstinate stupidity could never comprehend their questions.

Strange as it may appear, between Hoc Niger and Coweboscon there had sprung up a real friendship. Coweboscon was the only one of the slaves who did not manifest to Hoc the most uncompromising and hostile spirit. For this Hoc was grateful. He became attached to Coweboscon, whilst, on the other hand, was glad to assist in making Hoc happy. He had already assisted him considerably in learning arithmetic, and found him a most apt scholar. He learned with a most wonderful facility. Coweboscon soon found that his whole character was a most strange enigma. His disposition was really perverse and malicious; and yet Coweboscon often thought he found in him redeeming traits. He was grateful for the pain he had taken in instructing him, and in protecting him, so far as possible, from the malice of his fellow slaves, whose ill-will and hatred he had incurred. But notwithstanding all this, and notwithstanding the gratitude he really felt toward his friend and protector, he not infrequently repaid him for his kindness, by playing upon him some mischievous and annoying trick.

The overseer then took the whip, which was a heavy cowhide, and struck across the shoulders. The lash was buried in the flesh till the blood ran down his back in streams. A slight convulsive shudder ran through his frame at the first blow, but there was no struggle, nor a cry escaped him, not a groan. The blows fell in rapid succession, one, two, three, up to thirty, each one sinking into the trembling, quivering flesh. The ground was covered with blood, and strewed with small bits of raw flesh, long before the thirty were all given. At last the flogging ceased. His back was torn and lacerated as though it had been mangled by a wild beast.

Next came the 'paddling.' The paddle is a piece of oak plank, from two to three feet long, formed into the shape of an ordinary paddle. The wide end of the paddle is usually full of holes, burned with a hot iron. This is struck upon the soft, fleshy part of the body, and at every blow a blister is raised upon the spot, left by each one of the holes.

The driver now took the paddle, and swinging it over his head, so as to give it the most force, he struck the naked body on one, and death alone could satiate his wrath. He marked that victim, and in a chosen hour aimed his blow. For once it failed. Still his purpose faltered. His, however, was to be in doubt whether he did not do more harm than good.

He hired the assassin's guide, and by himself waylaid his victim.

Failing in this, he shot him dead.

He fled from justice to a foreign land, but not to live in penitence.

He had not fully the measure of his crime until again he was pursued.

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